

Press Release
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CSOs Demanded a Stand-alone Human Rights instrument for the Climate Victims

Climate change impacts are causing disproportionate impacts and forcing people to compromise their basic human rights, a study sharing seminar in the national press club in Dhaka reveals. Speakers in the seminar demanded a stand-alone legal instrument under the UNFCCC. They put this demand in such a time when the UNHCR's Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change, Dr Ian Fry, is currently visiting Bangladesh to capture relevant evidences from the ground.

Center for Participatory Research and Development and its research partners SDS, MAASAUS and Badaban Shangho conducted the study in 600 families in Shariarpur, Rajshahi and Satkhira districts. The study identified an increase in dropping out of schools, child marriage, social and sexual harassment, abuse, gender-based violence, child labor etc. in the erosion displaced communities. An increase in women's uterus infection, preeclampsia, miscarriage etc. due to forced/helplessly intake and use of saline water in the south-west coastal areas. An increase of involuntary migration from the Barind areas while leaving women burdened with extra work and exposure to the social risks e.g., sexual violence. The study identified a clear link of rights violation especially when the residual impacts of extreme weather event and slow process become persistent and force people to compromise their basic needs and requirements.

Reflecting on the study findings, Sharif Jamil, General Secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA) said that it's not the climate change impacts only, there are other issues like governance failure, power and class domination, socio-political marginalization and exclusion etc., which act as the triggering factors of vulnerability. We need to address those also, otherwise we might fail to protect rights, he added.

Nikhil Bhadra, Senior Reporter, Kaler Kontho hailed the research findings as they established a causal relationship between climate change impacts and human rights violation. He emphasizes more such researches to capture on-the-ground evidences.

CPRD Chief Executive Md Shamsuddoha emphasizes establishment of a legal instrument or framework under the UNFCCC to safeguard rights of the climate victims. He also demanded IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) special report on human rights and climate change. Such a report would advance science-based argument for establishing a multi-lateral legal instrument for protecting human rights of the climate victims.

Rabeya Begum, Executive Director SDS and said that 'Let not there be a single more instance of child marriage, harassment and gender-based violence'. Countries are beholden by a number of UN Conventions and by their respective constitutions to ensure and safeguard fundamental citizenry rights. Among others. Lipi Rahman, Executive Director of Badabon Shangho, and Merina Husda, Executive Director MAASAUS spoke in the event.

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